

**Greenpeace exposes massive illegal cultivation of GM soya
at the Hungarian border**
Coexistence of GM and non-GM crops is impossible

Batăr, Bihor, the 9th of October 2007 – Greenpeace welcomes the actions of the National Environmental Guard that yesterday has discovered 290 hectares of GM soya being illegally cultivated in Batar in the county of Bihor at the border with Hungary [1]. This case is being added to the other 16 cases of illegal cultivation of GM crops (14 of soya, 1 of plum trees and 1 of potatoes) investigated and published by Greenpeace in 2005-2007 [2], and to the 142 cases exposed in the global GM contamination register [3].

The farmers have the habit of saving seeds from the own harvest to sow it the next year. The agricultural machines for sowing and harvesting, and the seeds transport vehicles are inevitably mixing GM and non-GM seeds and therefore contaminating the environment. There are no separate spaces for storage and lines for processing GM crops and they can contaminate the food: *"This new case of massive illegal cultivation of GM soya shows that GM crops cannot be kept under control. The co-existence of GM crops with the non-GM ones is a myth! The Environment Minister Atilla Korodi must immediately ban the import and the cultivation of GM crops in order to protect the environment and the human health."* said Gabriel Paun, Greenpeace Campaigner against GMOs.

Even though banned by law, GM soya [4] keeps contaminating the environment. This year another bigger threat popped up in Romania, GM maize MON810, produced by the American company Monsanto [5] which is being illegally approved by the Ministry of Agriculture to be cultivated on 332 ha in 6 counties, including in Arad [6] which is again at the border with Hungary where MON810 is banned for cultivation. In addition to the mechanical contamination methods occurring with GM soya, GM maize can also contaminate the neighbouring fields cultivated with non-GM maize varieties by pollen being carried by insects or/and wind. *"The Agriculture Ministry is overfullfilled by massive illegal cultivation of GMOs and will be the one responsible if the GM soya and maize will be found in the Romanian food. Let's remember the recent survey that shows that the vast majority of the Romanians rejects GM food. [7]"*, concluded Paun.

Greenpeace demands:

- **National Environmental Guard to destroy immediately the GM soya cultivated in Batar, Bihor**
- **Ministry of Agriculture to take control of the situation of illegal cultivation of GM crops**
- **National Authority for Consumer Protection to initiate controls for food containing maize and soya produced in Romania to assure that food will not be contaminated with GMOs**
- **Environment Ministry to ban import and cultivation of GMOs in Romania**

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NOTES:

[1] National Environment Guard of Bihor County note no. 2088/26.09.2007

[2] Greenpeace exposed wide commercial cultivation of illegal GE crops, a flourishing black market in GE seeds, recurrent cases of contamination of processing plants and the widespread presence of illegal GE food products on the market in Romania <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/GE-Romania>

[3] GMOs contamination register is available for downloading at:
<http://www.gmcontaminationregister.org/>

[4] The Romanian Government has banned cultivation of GM soya starting 1st of January 2007
http://www.mapam.ro/pages/view_presa.php?id=1238&lang=2

[5] Monsanto is the american company that created and owns 91% of GM seeds in the world:
<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/international/press/reports/genetix-crime-unit.pdf>

[6] Ministry of Environment letter to Greenpeace No.122411/ 41635 / 16.05.2007 :

„According to Law 214/2002, any cultivation of superiour GM crops can be done only in the basis of a notification. Up to date Ministry of Environment has not received any notification regarding comercial cultivation of MON810.”

[7] The survey ordered by Greenpeace shows that 67% of the romanians rejects GM food. The survey has been conducted by S.C Mercury Research S.R.L. between May – July 2007 and is available by request